

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Rep. Boucher Tackles Transportation, Education, Tax Issues**



State Rep. Toni Boucher, R-143<sup>rd</sup> District, Wilton, Norwalk, has been appointed to the legislature's Appropriations, Education and Transportation committees where she plans to push for improving rail transit, fair funding of public schools and holding down taxes.

"Once again one of the most pressing issues facing the legislature is a budget gap, due to uncontrolled spending in many areas," said Rep. Boucher. "We need to reorder our priorities so that transportation is properly funded and schools receive their fair share of state aid."

She said other high-profile issues of the session will be medical malpractice insurance reform, stem cell research, prescription drug costs for seniors, special education costs to towns and many more.

Rep. Boucher and other Fairfield County legislators are pushing the state Department of Transportation to replace the aging 30-year-old fleet of Metro-North commuter rail cars that are prone to breakdowns and delays. She praised the Citizen's Transportation Lobby for bringing 200 people to Hartford recently to press for rail and road improvements.

On education, she singled out the need to boost the amount of state aid for Norwalk and Wilton students.

Rep. Boucher said, "Hartford, Bridgeport and New Haven school districts receive \$6,000 or more per student, while Norwalk and Wilton receive a tiny fraction of that amount. Norwalk, in particular, does not receive the reimbursement needed to fund the students' needs, given the community's ability to pay."

She and House Republican colleagues have called for the complex state school aid formula to be scrapped, simplified and revamped this year.

On the state budget, Rep. Boucher said, "Tax increases should be only the last resort, after all efforts to control spending and increase efficiency in state government. We also must adhere to a constitutional spending cap that was approved in a statewide referendum by 80 percent of Connecticut voters."

“Already, Connecticut lags the nation in job creation; and we should avoid increases in taxes, regulations and other costs of doing business that discourage the hiring of new employees in the state,” added Rep. Boucher.

Regarding education, Rep. Boucher noted that the legislature’s Education Committee oversees the state Department of Education which implements the policies and programs adopted by the legislature regarding the state’s 500,000 public school children.

“People are invited to submit their comments to the committee or through me on education issues statewide,” said Rep. Boucher. “Citizens also can follow legislation through the legislature’s website, [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov).”

“Unlike other states, Connecticut makes it easier for the public to follow the progress of proposed legislation because we have one joint committee for such issues as transportation, rather than separate House and Senate committees,” she added.

Rep. Boucher also serves on the Appropriations Committee’s subcommittees on Higher Education and Transportation, which recommend state funding for colleges, universities, roads, airports and commuter rail service. She has been pushing for improvements in both these areas.

Rep. Boucher serves the 143<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District of Wilton and Norwalk in the state House of Representatives.